

lightened Europe," remarks Mr Burke, " was devoted to the collection of ancient MSS., the Primate of Spain was burning them by tens of thousands in the public square at Granada. When the intelligent stranger was being welcomed in every other country of Christendom, the Queen of Castile was banishing every Moor from her dominions; when commerce was beginning to be considered the most important element in the prosperity of States, the Catholic sovereigns turned every man of business out of Spain. And in subsequent generations, when religious Protestantism was asserting itself in every country, and the political rights of the weak were coming to be recognised in every commonwealth, Spain appeared as the champion of the most sanguinary Catholicism in the least Catholic of her provinces in Northern Europe, and as the destroyer of millions of the gentlest of her own subject races in the New World. . . . During the whole of the critical period of the Renaissance, when every European State was growing and expanding in the light of new learning and new methods . . . Spain was surely riveting upon herself the chains of ignorance with a fervour and fury no less remarkable than that which was urging on the reformers and discoverers of neighbouring countries." Even the mediaeval anarchist of noble birth could not have worked more mischief to the best interests of his country than a queen whose mentors in religious policy were a Torquemada, and other equally fanatic successors of St Dominic. This policy of merciless religious persecution, which embraced Christians as well as Jews and Moors, was part and parcel of the policy of the repression of political rights and liberties. It was not only religious zeal but political craft that urged an Isabella, a Ferdinand, a Charles, a Philip, on the fatal path of intolerance. On the one hand, persecution brought grist in plenty to the royal mill in the shape of the confiscated property of the heretic. On the other, the Inquisition was an effective check on political independence, criticism, opposition—a potent instrument of political unity. There was certainly strong inducement to support a tribunal which, during even the comparatively short period of Torquemada's *regime* as inquisitor-general of Castile and Aragon (1483-1498), mulcted about 100,000 persons of their property, burned fully 10,000, and